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Security Information

DEC 11 1952

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence  
THROUGH: Deputy Director (Intelligence)  
SUBJECT: Unidentified Flying Objects  
REFERENCE: (a) Request of the Director of 10 December 1952  
(b) Memo from AD/SI to Director dated 10 December 1952

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1. Pursuant to the request of the Director, the following amplification of Reference (b) and review of the current situation is submitted. A preliminary review of the USAF investigation of this subject has been completed. With respect to the recent incidents enumerated in Reference (b), additional information has been obtained which is appended as Tab A.

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2. A trip to Air Technical Intelligence Center was made on Friday, 12 December by AD/SI, [redacted] (consultant), and [redacted] (Operations Staff/SI). During this visit the O/SI group was briefed on the current status of the investigation, and copies of selected case studies and progress reports were obtained. This material has been subsequently studied in detail.

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3. There still exists no reasonable evidence that the objects sighted are of foreign origin. While there is no indication that these objects represent a direct threat to the national defense, there are certain potential dangers which are related to these sightings. As a result of the trip and these conclusions, O/SI is proceeding with plans to convene a group (probably not more than three), of top level consultants in the fields of physics (radar and upper atmosphere), astrophysics and astronomy, to review the evidence and recommend with respect to:

- a. Methodology of investigation of unidentified flying objects.
- b. Instrumentation to obtain data in future sightings.
- c. Methods of rapid identification of unidentified flying objects.
- d. Desirability for convening of a larger panel.

We are deferring for the present the convening of a large panel of diverse scientific interests for a detailed review of the substantive aspects of the problem because of insufficient and incomplete data.

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4. An informal query [redacted] of current interest in this subject resulted in a report that the subject had been quiet until about two weeks ago, when a "sighting of a perfect flying saucer" was made by [redacted]. More information on this case is being obtained.

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[redacted]  
H. MARSHALL CHADWELL  
Assistant Director  
Scientific Intelligence

Enclosure - Tab A

Distribution:

Director - orig & 1  
DD/I - 1  
P&E/SI - 1  
W&E/SI - 1  
Opns/SI - 1  
AD/SI - 2

OSI:RLC:FCD/mtw

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TAB A

1. Motion Pictures, Tremonton, Utah

This case involves the sighting and photographing (Kodachrome film) of ten bright lights moving across the sky on 2 July 1952 in rough formation. Source is a Chief Photographer's Mate, USN, with 17 years photographic experience. The local time was 1110; weather conditions bright, clear, no clouds. Objects appeared to be "milling about" while traveling in a westerly direction across the sky. Source was driving along the road when the sighting occurred. He stopped the car and photographed the event with his personal camera. Toward the end of the sighting, one object separated from the rest and reversed course across the sky.

Status: ATIC Photographic Laboratory examination of the film resulted in following conclusions:

- a. 10 objects, all alike in movement and size.
- b. Decidedly improbable that they are birds or balloons.
- c. Exact nature cannot be determined, because they are visible only as small spots of light. It can be deduced, however, that they are either non-spherical in shape and similar to bright metal in reflectance or else variably self-luminous. Objects which follow similar courses show similar brightness fluctuations which could be caused by their taking similar flight attitudes.
- d. Apparently a coordination of movement to some extent among these objects. They seem to move in formations which are probably 3-dimensional in arrangement.
- e. The movements suggest flight paths consisting of skew curves in space.
- f. The single object which reversed course remained reasonably uniform in brightness. It followed a nearly straight line path with reasonable uniformity of motion at an angular velocity of about  $2.1^\circ/\text{sec}$ . (This is equivalent to the following speeds: 37 mph @ 500 yards; 75 mph @ 1000 yards; 373 mph @ 5000 yards; 756 mph @ 10,000 yards; etc.).
- g. It would probably be extremely difficult to imitate this photography for fraudulent purposes.

This film is currently under examination by the U. S. Navy Photo Interpretation Laboratory, Anacostia. Estimated completion date: 15 January 1953.

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2. Bright Light sighted from Presque Isle and Limestone Air Force Bases, Maine

This sighting occurred the night of 10-11 October 1952 from 2300 to 0300 local time, by observers at the weather stations at these Air Force Bases. The description of the light was "circular orange object with four green lights nearby." Theodolite sightings of elevation and azimuth were obtained. Weather was clear.

Status: A comparison of observed azimuths and elevations of the supposed object with the calculated position and relative motion of the planet Jupiter leave little doubt that the observed object was actually Jupiter.

3. Reported Sightings of a Strange Object in Florida

This sighting was reported by a Boy Scoutmaster to have occurred at 2150 local time on 19 August 1952 near West Palm Beach, Florida. According to the story given, the source was driving along deserted road in his car, together with four Boy Scouts. Sighting a strange light, source stopped the car, cautioned the boys to wait, and entered the palmetto undergrowth alone. When he did not return in a few minutes, and witnessing some strange lights in the vicinity of the scoutmaster, the boys went for help, returning with a deputy sheriff. The scoutmaster appeared, badly frightened, slightly burned on the forearms. His story was that he had seen a large circular object about eight feet over his head which had released a "fire ball" which descended on him. He stated that he had thrown himself upon the ground and "blacked out." There were various other embroideries to the story. His cap was burned slightly and samples of grass taken from the immediate vicinity of the "sighting" differed strangely in appearance from samples 75 yards away.

Status: The background of the source indicates an unsavory personal reputation and criminal record, resulting in the belief that the report may have been an elaborate hoax. However, the unusual condition of the grass samples is currently unexplained. This fact, together with other aspects of the case, leave final determination in doubt at this time.



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While there is no indication that these objects represent a direct threat to the national defense, there are certain potential dangers which are related to these sightings. These are:

1. The difficulty and delay in positive identification which could weaken the early warning system in alerting defense in the event of commencement of hostilities.\*
2. The possibility of mass hysteria which might be purposely induced by an enemy at a critical time by faked reports.
3. The possibility that the emergency communications systems to command headquarters might be seriously overloaded at a critical time by such reports.

It is believed that the problems of communications confusion and overload and the serious effects of mass hysteria must be dealt with outside the intelligence community, and it is planned to bring these matters to the attention of those agencies with whom the prime responsibility appears to rest. With respect to mass hysteria, it is believed this problem would lie with the Federal Civil Defense Administration and/or the Interdepartmental Committee on Internal Security. Accordingly, it is planned to bring this to the attention of the FCDA and ICIS through established channels. With respect to emergency communications overloading, it is believed that each of the individual Military Services should examine this problem. Accordingly, we intend to introduce the subject at a meeting of the Joint Communications and Electronics Committee.

*\* According to Brig. Gen. AIR Maxwell (RDB) ADC is "conscious of this potential danger," and does "express concern"*